

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

September 28, 2011, 4:30p.m.

Council Chambers

PRESENT

Ian Kohen
Greg Lewis
Gil Palmer
Rosalind Pegram
Shiva Rallapalli
John Roberts
John Stroh

ABSENT

Rhea Baker-Ipek
Trena Carter
Tony McClendon

Meeting Called to Order

STAFF PRESENT:

Director Lorraine Smith, Deputy Director Frances Jordan and Secretary Lula Young.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Secretary Roberts called roll and presented the May 2011 Minutes for approval.

Commissioner Stroh moved that the May Minutes be approved as presented. Commissioner Rallapalli seconded. May Minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Director Smith reported \$10,917.15 as the Donations Account beginning balance; expenses of \$64.20 and \$120.00 for flowers and Literacy Task Force Spelling Bee respectively, leaving the donations/non-reverting funds account balance as \$10,732.95.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

Chairperson Palmer voiced his appreciation and thanked Commissioner Pegram for filling in for him at the Literacy Task Force Spelling Bee.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Smith informed Commissioners of many activities within the community that involved staff participation and that Deputy Director Jordan had attended an ADA Transitions workshop, Diversity Roundtable and the EEOC Conference in Indianapolis with her next conference being the Indiana Consortium Conference in Evansville. She also informed Commissioners that Issue 3 of the 'Empowering Columbus' Newsletter is ready for an October 3 distribution. She asked Commissioners to provide their feedback after reviewing the newsletter. She continued her report, advising that positive feedback has been received about the newsletter from many areas of the community

The Director announced that the Interfaith Forum would be co-sponsoring Reconciliation Day events with Columbus Peace Fellowship and North Christian Church on Tuesday, October 4th. Events for the day would begin at 5:15p.m. and end at 9:00pm and include a meal, documentary film: *Of Gods and*

Man and conclude with a panel discussion and dialogue on the topic of **Assumptions and Reconciliation**. Discussion ensued.

Director Smith invited all to attend the last film in the CAMEO FEAST- ival series, Pressure Cooker on Monday, October 10th at 6:00pm at Yes Cinema. The teacher highlighted in the film, Wilma Stephenson, will be present to host a question and answer session after the film. Discussion ensued.

Director Smith updated Commissioners on City Council Liaison activity and that council liaison, Priscilla Scalf had completed commissioner interviews and would be recommending Andrae Marak for appointment to be appointed by City Council to fulfill the term of Akua Agyei on October 4th, at the next council meeting. Discussion ensued.

Director Smith discussed staff activities including her mentoring of Jarred Myers on his Senior Project on Bullying. She stated that Deputy Director Jordan was able to attend Jarred's presentation to the BCSC Anti-Bullying Task Force, who was very pleased with his presentation. She continued reporting on other staff activities such as providing technical assistance to community members on Housing and Employment issues in the areas of accommodation of a disability, sex discrimination and sexual orientation discrimination. Discussion ensued.

Additional topics discussed by Director Smith included attending a mayoral forum at the Learning Center. She advised both candidates spoke favorably of the Commission in response to the question of how they would expand the Human Rights Commission. The director continued by advising of a falsumor that had been circulating that one of the mayoral candidates planned to get rid of the Commission. Discussion ensued

Director Smith announced the passing of Lynn Bigley, the first female chairperson of the Human Rights Commission and a champion of civil rights.

FOR ACTION: Implementation Plan of Commission Goals:

Director Smith provided Commissioners with a copy of the 2011 Goals and Objectives and advised that staff continues to implement the listed strategies offer training to all commissioners. In accordance with the goal of 'Educating the Public' and increasing Commissioner visibility in the public eye, an Ambassador or Speaker's Bureau is . Deputy Director Jordan has updated the Commission's new website, created a Face book page, Blog and Twitter accounts. The Deputy Director walked the commissioners through the PowerPoint: Implementation of Goals and Objectives Sept. 2011. Discussion ensued. There was consensus that the implementation of the goals and objectives be pursued as presented.

Staff with the commissioners discussed the possible scheduling of the first “Empowering Columbus Talks” program. The first potential speaker is Dr. Una Okonkwo Osili, Director of Research at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. The talk is tentatively scheduled for January 25th.

Director Smith advised that staff is pursuing Luke Visconti, CEO of Diversity Inc., for the 2012 annual dinner will be Luke Visconti, partner and co-founder of Diversity Inc. magazine. Commissioners continued to engage in discussion about the annual dinner speaker, outcome measurements, part II of the oral history, and contacting local foundations for assistance with speaker fees.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Rallapalli moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Stroh seconded. Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.